

colleagues, another zero in my district. That is the number of senior citizens who think that the Medicare Modernization Act is a good deal for them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STRICKLAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to use the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

ADMINISTRATION LAUNCHES NEW CAMPAIGN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the administration has launched a new campaign to win the Iraq war. The offensive is not in Baghdad or Fallujah or Sadr City. It is in New York and right here in Washington, D.C. The administration has launched another public relations campaign. They did it in the run-up to the war, and they are doing it again in the run-up to the election.

The administration will have its Iraqi functionary here in a few days to speak to this Congress. The appearance by Mr. Allawi in the U.S. Congress is meant to give the American people the illusion that Mr. Allawi was elected, not appointed. It is meant to suggest stability amid a sea of escalating violence.

The American people will decide what they believe to be true. They have already had a preview, because England was the first stop on the PR campaign. This is what the American people are going to hear over and over and over again. In London, Mr. Allawi downplayed the growing violence in Iraq. Since the middle of June, in just the last 90 days, the chaos in Iraq has claimed more than 2,000 Iraqi lives and more Americans than in any other part of this war, yet the administration's hand-picked administrator says of the insurgency, "It is not getting stronger. We are squeezing out the insurgency."

Then, he changed that glowing assessment for a different British audience where Mr. Allawi said, "Terrorists are coming and pouring in from various countries."

Now, what is the real story? We will still be asking that question after Mr. Allawi leaves.

At a time when the American people need straight talk about what is happening in Iraq, we are going to get carefully planned photo opportunities.

The groundwork has already been laid. Just the other day, the President told the American people, "I am pleased with the progress." Really, Mr. President?

Iraq today is more violent than ever. Insurgency is either being squeezed out or terrorists are pouring in. Check the morning paper tomorrow or the nightly news if you are not sure which of those statements is correct. Iraq is so out of control that religious clerics are being assassinated in broad daylight. Hostages are being kidnapped from guarded homes and beheaded. And U.S. soldiers are in greater danger than ever. Iraq is so out of control that a new offensive by the U.S. military is being planned for later this year, but not until after the election. Sounds a lot like Nixon's secret plan to end the war.

The administration is delaying action because it denies the magnitude of the crisis in Iraq. Instead, they want carefully-scripted political appearances and speeches to make the American people believe that your eyes and your ears deceive you. The coming public relations events are meant to do just that.

The President says he is pleased with the progress. Mr. Allawi says elections are coming. Mr. Allawi also admits that the so-called free elections in January may only be about half fair. When he speaks before the Congress, I hope Mr. Allawi will clarify which half of the Iraqi election will be fair and which will be rigged. The American people deserve straight talk, but we are getting double-talk. So is the rest of the world.

At the United Nations today, the President said he is "enforcing the demands of the world." Less than a week ago, the U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan told the world that the Iraq war was illegal.

At the U.N. today, there was every opportunity for the President to tell it like it is. Instead, he told it like the spin doctors want it, and the world heard the sound of a President in total denial.

Later this week, Mr. Allawi will say exactly what the administration wants him to say as their puppet here in the House. He is their guy. This is their war, and they need more money. They will say what they want us to hear, despite the deafening sounds of daily violence underneath their very words. They will say what they hope will silence the critics, because they cannot silence the gunfire. They will say whatever they think will win another term in office, because that is their first and only priority.

That is not the way to fight a war or win the peace, but it is the only way this administration knows, which is why Iraq's best chance for peace can only be realized by a regime change in the United States. It will happen on November 2.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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RECORD DEFICITS ABOUND

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McCOTTER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, in less than 10 days we will close the books on fiscal year 2004, and what a year it has been. A few days after that we will declare a deficit of \$422 billion. You got it, \$422 billion.

Now, there will be all sorts of spin to make that shortfall seem a lot less serious than it really is. But here are the hard facts. At \$422 billion, this year's gift will set an all-time record, \$47 billion more than last year, which itself last year was the worst deficit on record. And at \$422 billion this deficit is bad enough; but if you back out the surplus in Social Security, as you should, 15 years ago we adopted a law and said Social Security shall not be included in the regular budget of the United States. It is, after all, a trust fund. The money is incumbent for the beneficiaries.

So if you back out those trust funds and the surplus they incur this year, the deficit in the regular budget of the United States is \$574 billion for fiscal year 2004, \$574 billion, more than a half trillion dollars in debt.

Now, the President keeps telling us that this economy is on the mend. Usually when the economy gets better, the bottom line of the budget gets better, but not now. This year's deficit, you see, is not going away. It is not even going down by much. Even if the economy improves, it will still be about where it is, 4 to \$500 billion for the next 10 years. What we have got, what we are stuck with for the time being until we do something about it is what economists call a structural deficit. It is built into the texture of the budget itself.

On the House Committee on the Budget, our Democratic staff has taken the latest projection of the deficit and the economy given to us just a few days ago by the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, our neutral, nonpartisan budget shop. We have taken their forecast, and we have made what we regard as political readjustments to it. We